1:Williams E,G-5 (1923-1925) 1930
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delicate little *Hajojo* which resembles a flying squirrel, and which makes the prettiest if not always the most docile of pets. There are many more bush creatures perfectly known to Papuan (if not so well to European) zoology, and all, while they serve the more utilitarian purpose of diet, are especially interesting because their names constantly recur in the Aesopian legends with which Orokaiva folk-lore abounds.

Reptiles are not less common than in other parts of the Territory. Snakes, from the python to the smallest and deadliest, are regarded with a queer mixture of feelings in which sometimes veneration, sometimes horror, and sometimes hunger gains the upper hand. The lizard is killed, its flesh dried in the smoke against some future feast, and its skin stretched over the drum as a tympanum. Crocodiles, the most terrible of the Papuan's natural enemies, abound near the river-mouths, and their attacks have sometimes been so frequent on village pigs and dogs and on women filling their gourds at the water's edge, that favourable settlements have had to be abandoned. Yet even the crocodile is often outwitted in the legends and occasionally caught and eaten in reality.

Flying-foxes or fruit-bats are numerous and destructive. From their camping-grounds, where they hang by day in lazy myriads from the branches, they steadily wing their way at evening to the gardens which they mean to plunder, and after this nocturnal migration may be seen steadily beating back at earliest daybreak. To the Orokaiva as to ourselves there is a hint of the spectral about the flying-fox, and it is not surprising that it should find a place in their legends and theories of the life after death.

Birds are of interest to the northern native mainly as providing the plumes which, fastened together in head-dresses, make him, as they are meant to do, more attractive in love and more terrifying in war. Thus parrots, king-fishers, and birds of paradise supply in their brilliant plumage one of the principal kinds of convertible wealth. The domestic cock is valued for the same reason, being mercilessly plucked and bereft of his sweeping tail feathers in

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order to serve the vanity of his owner. The great corrugated beak of the hornbill is valued as an ornament, and apparently in earlier times was an emblem of the homicide. The bird is frequently seen as a pet, being accommodated like the parrot or the white cockatoo in a little house of its own. Sometimes the young cassowary is domesticated, until as he grows up his aggressive manners and sharp claws make him an unmanageable member of village society, when he usually takes to the bush and rejoins his own kind. The cassowary is common in the hills though comparatively rare on the plains.

Even in so sketchy a list of the creatures which as friends or enemies share the habitat of the Orokaiva one should not fail to make a passing mention of the insects. It is well enough known that the most terrible predatory creature of Papua is the mosquito, and parts of the Northern Division, particularly the lower Mambare, deserve the bad reputation which it has given them. A magistrate wrote, I think without exaggeration, of this district:

'It is infested by multitudes of the most voracious mosquitoes, so that for that reason alone, one falls to wondering what could induce any one to live there. The native is not by any means immune to the bites of these pests. On my visits to these villages, I have seen the people sitting full in the acrid smoke of large wood fires, or beating their bodies with palm fronds, and they have complained to me that life is unbearable on account of the mosquitoes.' [1]

The scourge of mosquitoes has been bad enough to drive out whole village communities. Manau is said to have migrated from the present site of Bebewa, some distance up the river simply to escape them. Leaving behind the mosquitoes, however, the emigrants have established themselves in a region of countless sand-flies, and it is questionable whether their second state is not worse than their first. These infinitesimal insects (whose irritating bite is out of all proportion to their size) infest the brown sea-beaches of the north-east coast. But while they make life unbearable for a European it would seem as if the natives enjoy a certain amount of immunity from their poison.

[1] S. A. Greenland in *Annual Report*, 1912–13, p. 127.

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224 rat ventures out towards the bait and as it passes the point of weakness the stick breaks, and it is thrown into the hole from which there is no escape. (Plate XI).

The springe (*ibive*) is used for wallaby and other small game. It is set either on a track known to be frequented by wallaby or else by a hole in the garden fence, where a wallaby might enter. A strong pole (*butarika*) to which a running noose (*ivasi*) and a light rod (*bi*) are attached is bent down and held in place by a cross-piece (*iabi*) as shown in the diagram. The wallaby disturbs the *iabi*, over which the

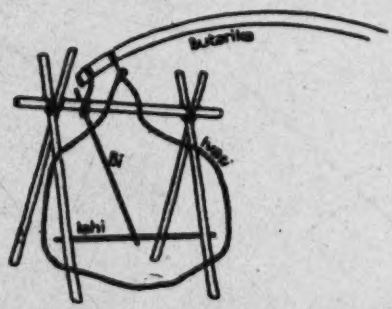

FIG. 4. *Ibive* or Wallaby Trap.

noose is spread, and so releases the spring and is caught. A rather odd transposition of names will be seen by comparing the sketches of the wallaby trap and the rat-trap.

223 *Bird Catching.* Bright feathers, such as those of the com-
[556] mon bird of paradise (raggiana), parrots, kingfishers, and numerous small but brilliant varieties, are a definite form of wealth with the Orokaiva, and are preserved with great care.
● [231] A fledgling may be kept and eventually treated with kindness as a pet, but if a man find a beautiful little bird defending her nest in the hollow of a tree it will not cross his mind to be compassionate. The feathers are too tempting.

The commonest method of catching birds is that of a running noose (*buri* or *ni-sai*) attached to a long line. The noose is spread along the branch of a flowering or fruiting tree which is frequented by bright-plumaged birds, while the snarer, usually a boy, remains in concealment holding

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lumps of the requisite size. These are rapidly singed in a fire of dry leaves and so acquire a brown glazed surface, a sort of tough skin which preserves the interior against moisture. The work is now finished. The glazed lump of sago is neatly bound with sago leaves, packed into the hollow of a sago branch, and carried home. Under favourable conditions two or three men will easily make 100 lb. in a day.

Collecting

The Orokaiva is a collector only by necessity or opportunity. When a prolonged drought in the South-East season causes a scarcity of food, collecting assumes importance, and a reduced diet must be eked out with roots, leaves, and fern fronds. While it is only under such stress that he collects systematically, he nevertheless keeps his eye open at all times for chance blessings when he is working or travelling. For tearing down betel pepper (*bingi*) or the somewhat rare fruits of the bush he will tie a pair of poles together and bind on a small oblique peg at the end to make a hook. This crude improvisation called *kainpo* may have a reach of 30 feet. The native is, moreover, a nimble and daring climber. If, however, neither his *kainpo* nor his climbing are equal to the occasion, he will fell a large tree for the sake of a little honey or even a nest of edible insects.

Frogs, snails, and fresh-water bivalves are collected by the humbler hands of women, but not in any quantity; they amount to nothing more than savouries.

Domesticated Animals

The Pig. The village pig and the wild pig are of the same species, the latter being continually domesticated. When a wild sucking-pig is captured by hunters, it is brought to the village and gradually tamed. Its roving and lawless nature may be restrained by the constant companionship of a long stick tied to its hind leg; it is fed and petted, its ears are snipped, it is castrated, and finally becomes as nearly domesticated as any other native pig. It is accustomed to forage about the village and to roam the neighbouring bush,

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where females are served by wild boars. It is fed every evening, and probably sleeps under the house.

Always a restless and obtrusive creature, the village pig is sometimes aggressive towards strangers, so that more than one visitor, even of magisterial importance, has been compelled to seek safety in the altitude of a house verandah. But, however unattractive, the pig is treated with consideration and even fondness by the villagers. Its owners, man and wife, are referred to as its father and mother. While young it may be washed with a magical infusion to promote its growth. It is given a personal name, and as it grows becomes an identity of importance in the village. As the inevitable hour of parting draws near, its 'mother' will be genuinely grief-stricken; and when at last her pig is bound for the sacrifice and lies groaning and struggling under the house, she will sit beside it, stroking it and shedding copious tears.

The pig is carried in the usual manner, with its feet bound to a pole. For a long journey a pig-litter (*kakate*) may be used. It is a cage-like structure of cane which, as it were, is made to measure and fits closely about the animal's body (see p. 79). The conventional method of slaughtering is with the spear, and at a feast of importance this is done ceremonially, a number of pigs being set in a row and stuck simultaneously. On such an occasion I have seen one of the butchers, more elderly than the rest, fail to impart sufficient force to his thrust, and try again, amid a good deal of laughter, until he drove the point home. Then he levered the shaft of his weapon back and forth like a crow-bar to make his work the surer. On the whole, however, there is no special inhumanity in the treatment of pigs.

The actual butchering is performed on a platform. Two long incisions are made from shoulder to tail, and the skin cut off together with a thick coating of fat. Then the body is dismembered with axe, trade knife, and bamboo knife (the last-named, *ivi*, is still used because of its extraordinary sharpness). The carving is not a pleasing spectacle. The blood drips through between the rails of the platform and is eagerly lapped up by quarrelling dogs below. There may

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231 be some delay in the distribution of the meat, and then the scene of the feast becomes a veritable shambles. There is little squeamishness with the native, however, and even the entrails are not despised. As it was explained (whether naïvely or waggishly) on one occasion, fresh entrails are suitable for men; if they stink a little they are suitable for women; and if they stink a great deal they will do for the children.

The Dog. The native dog is small, though better grown than those in some other parts of the Territory. It is commonly not more than 12 or 13 inches at the withers, though some, notably those of the Gira and the Waria, are larger. It has pointed ears and snout, and the tail has a very slight suggestion of brush. In colour it is usually yellow-brown, though sometimes black. It is undeniably a game little animal, an excellent hunter of small game, and equal to bringing a bush-pig to bay.[1]

Dogs are treated affectionately enough by their owners. I have known an elderly man declare his intention of leaving his village and 'signing on' for a year because his dog had fallen into a pit-trap and killed itself. It is true he subsequently thought better of his decision, but he was no doubt sorry to lose his dog. However, the dog does not compare with the pig in Orokaiva estimation. It is always less of a pet than a servant, and is ultimately destined for the pot. In slaughtering it is seized by the hind legs and its body dashed against a tree, a method which seems brutal but is instantly effective. Many specimens are mangy and diseased. They are proverbially susceptible to the cold and are commonly seen crouching in the ashes of a hardly expired fire. Indeed, the dog is said to have a special prerogative over the fire by virtue of the legendary fact that he first brought it to the Orokaiva.

235 *The Domestic Fowl.* Nowadays there are some European fowls in the Northern Division, and many of a native breed. By common consent of many old informants these latter are pre-European. Both are called *bobora*. The native cock is

[1] The native dog of the Purari Delta (Report No. 3, p. 27) is no doubt a degenerate of the same species. From the canine point of view the Delta must be a very unfavourable environment.

2: Williams E, G-5 (1923-1925) 1928
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a trigger and lever and brings down a weight of logs on his back; (2) *Hoto*, a concealed pit, the bottom of which is abristle with spear-points; and (3) *Kombu bagi*, a close array of sloping spear-points on the inner side of a gap in the garden fence, so called because the pig, having leapt unwarily through the gap, finds himself transfixed through the *kombu*, or liver. There is an ingenious trap known as *Ihive* for small wallabies, consisting of a noose, a sapling bent to the ground, and a trigger. The trigger is released, the sapling springs upright, and the wallaby is, or ought to be, dangling in the noose. There are many other interesting methods which cannot be described here of catching cuscus, bats, rats, birds, and lizards, all such creatures being held at their proper value as diet by the Orokaiva.

The native is of course a pig-keeper, and one who is constantly obtaining fresh recruits for domestication in the shape of captive sucking-pigs from the bush. But pigs are meant for feasts and ceremonies; there is no regular supply of butcher's meat. When all is said and done, meat food is to the Orokaiva, like many another keen hunter, rather a dainty than a diet.

In fishing there is some variety of methods. The inland people rely mainly on various forms of scoop-nets which are used in shallow creeks. They also poison fish with the plant known as 'New Guinea Dynamite'. The river people use in addition a kind of stationary trap called *sirava*, and the coast dwellers, besides all these, have the common triangular hand-net *yako* and a drag-net *komboru*. In fishing, as in hunting, there are many other contrivances which cannot be dealt with here. On the whole (except in the case of the coastal people) it is of minor importance as a means of subsistence.

Another resource of much greater importance is sago. The river people, i.e. principally the Binandele, who live along the lower reaches of the Gira, Mambare, and Kumusi, have almost inexhaustible supplies to draw upon; and, except among the bush dwellers in the south-

2: Williams E, G-5 (1923-1925) 1928
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244 482 be accompanied by her husband they will probably return together about noon, he with his axe, knife, and spears over his shoulders, she, a few paces behind, bending forward under a weight of taro, greens, and firewood, her immensely distended string bag hanging over her back from a band across her sweating forehead, while the counter-balance of a sleeping baby in another string bag may hang before her. A small prick-eared dog trots alongside, and as the larger and more aggressive [23] animal that accompanies the white man comes into view, she will (to avoid the possibility of conflict) contrive in some manner to sink down and gather the extra burden of a dog into her arms.

244 Replanting goes on from time to time, and the successive plots may be marked off by log boundaries (*tani*). The period of greatest activity is perhaps about the beginning of the North-West season, when more abundant rain can be counted on, and when the whole clan may be engaged in planting out the offsets, or *bere*. But there is no seasonable rule, and *bere* may be transplanted into damp localities in the middle of a dry spell. Indeed, one man complained that a term of three months in the district jail had coincided with such a dry spell, and he had actually lost all his offsets for lack of transplanting.

251 [31] The fact that there is never real famine and that scarcity is a rare thing, brings about an attitude of mind which we might call improvidence. Yams are stored where they are grown; so also are *Tauga* nuts and *Puga*. But the two former are not common except in the south of the Division. Beyond these, and of course the coconut, the native puts by no vegetable food. When a feast 251 is preparing, the taro will be gathered in great quantities 754 and stacked on platforms. Some is eaten at the feast, some distributed with a great display of cordiality to the guests, who take it home. There is no method of preserving taro, and sometimes, when a feast is for any reason delayed, a great deal of food may deteriorate and become inedible.